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U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer announces committee investigation of West Fertilizer Co. explosion, federal oversight



By [Randy Lee Loftis](#)
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Sen. Barbara Boxer said the [Senate Environment and Public Works Committee](#), which she chairs, will investigate the explosion itself, the effort to determine what happened, and ways in which better regulation could prevent future disasters.

Boxer sent questions to the [U.S. Chemical Safety Board](#), which is on the scene, and the [Environmental Protection Agency](#). She asked the EPA to explain how it handles companies' required disclosures of chemical risks, suggesting that she suspects the agency might not have followed through on West's report and others around the country.

In a news release, Boxer said:

"I cannot rest until we get to the bottom of what caused the disaster in West, Texas and the tragic loss of life. It is critical that we find out how this happened. We must ensure that facilities like the one in West are complying with chemical safety laws. We will look at how the laws on the books are being enforced and whether there is a need to strengthen them.

Boxer gave the federal agencies until May 16 to answer her questions. She said she would schedule an oversight hearing soon.

EPW press release:

http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Majority.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=5c5072de-0c95-6026-d673-4d5bae108ba2&Region_id=&Issue_id=